ON THE

CRUCIFIXION

AND

RESURRECTION.

A

POEM.

By JAMES OGDEN,

AUTHOR of the BRITISH LION ROUZ'D.

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Advertiſement.

A PLAIN narration of matters of fact, is perhaps the beſt method of clearing up the fundamentals we have received as Chriſtians, whereof the chief is that of the Reſurrection. The ſtrongeſt evidence ſeems generally to be overlooked, and which ſtrikes immediately on reading the texts of ſcripture ſet to muſick in the Oratorio of Meſſiah: The compoſer having choſen the prophecies which point at the coming of Chriſt, for his firſt opening the performance; thoſe which ſpeak of his birth, life, doctrine, and miracles, for the middle; and thoſe relative to his ſufferings, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, and ſecond coming, to conclude: introducing, in each of theſe, thoſe texts from the New Teſtament, which ſhew the completion of each; whence it appears what a cloſe connexion there is between the cano-

nical

nical books of the Jews and Chriſtians. The latter of theſe, in this, have the teſtimony of their enemies, that ſuch things were foretold long before they came to paſs. And if we add to this, that the Jews are, according to their own prophecies, a vagabond people, we have an undeniable evidence, that ſome events, long ſince foretold in their books, are come to paſs; which is a ſtrong preſumption, that thoſe regarding Chriſt as their expected Meſſiah, their rejecting him, and hence the converſion of pagan nations, whom they held in the utmoſt contempt, are truly foretold, and as wonderfully fulfilled.

Thoſe ſcriptures, whether of the Old or New Teſtament, which relate to the Crucifixion and Reſurrection, are here caſt together: poetry may be ſubſervient to religion, if well executed; this is left to the public.

ON THE

CRUCIFIXION and RESURRECTION.

WHAT man is He, who weakly will aſpire
To canvas ſacred text, as common truths,
The webs of finite reas'ning; he but leaves
The ark, and, flutt'ring, like the *Patriarch*'s dove,
Still wanders from his reſt; till he returns
To drench his wing in *Shilo*'s brook, ſtruck dumb
Before the holy oracles of *God*.

Let who will ſeek to climb the giddy heights
Fabled of that *Parnaſſian* Mount; to drink
Of *Helicon*'s intoxicating ſtream;
Me ſhrubby *Olivet*, or *Gethſemene*
May well ſuffice; where oft the Son of man,
Nightly, in pray'r and ſolitude, expos'd
His goodly lineaments; or let me ſeek
Calvary, and with Him embrace the croſs:
Haply the rueful ſight of *Golgotha*
May check the ſtrain excurſive, leſt I ſing
Of light conceits, in looſer meaſur'd verſe.

Who's *This* that comes from *Edom*, on his way
To *Bozra*, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength
Travailing? *This* that by *Himſelf* has wrought
Salvation with his arm; is *This* the man
Whoſe form and viſage were ſo chang'd? Is *This*,
In his humiliation, Him that ſtood
And found no judgment, meekly while He gave
His back up to the ſmiters, and his cheeks

To them that plucked off the hair, nor hid
His face from ſhame and ſpitting? He who led
The houſe of *Iſrael*, like a flock of ſheep;
Nor hunger'd they, nor thirſted, in their way
Acroſs the howling wilderneſs? *His* name
What mortal, or his lin'age ſhall declare?
Yet He was bruiſed for us, when his ſoul
Was made a ſacrifice for ſin: He bore
Our ſorrows, and his ſtripes became our healing.

Wreſtling with *Death*, behold the *Son of man*
Hangs ignominious on the croſs. The *Jews*
Mock'd at his pangs; the ſoldiers, leſs concern'd,
Were dicing for his ſeamleſs coat. The ſun
Shone in his ſtrength: The moon wheel'd oppoſite
Her perfect orb; now haſt'ning to her wane:
Behold ſhe reddens! As a twinkling ſtar
Firſt ſeen far off, and now extinct, He veils
His glories! not in dim eclipſe, but dark
As that diſaſt'rous night, when *Memphis* mourn'd
Her firſt-born ſmote of man and beaſt. The earth

Con-

Convuls'd, from all her firm foundations ſhook!
The *Grave* gave up her dead! The ſolid rock,
Torn from his baſe, with many a fearful craſh
Plung'd to the nether deep! while *Clamour* rode
Triumphant on the foamy ſurge, and howl'd
Among the billows! *Chaos* heard the noiſe,
And from his dark pavilion, where he ſits
With ſable-veſted *Night*, reſponſive roar'd!

How long the *Grave* retain'd her prey, ſo long
The *Deep* ſtood yawning for the wreck of worlds!
But when the third morn roſe, the doors of *Death*
Burſt, while an angel roll'd away the ſtone
From the ſepulchre; then the hardy *Roman*
Shrunk from his poſt, who ſeldom ſhrunk, aghaſt!

Thenceforth, the ſword was girded on thy thigh,
O Thou moſt mighty! and thy right hand wrought
Terrible things! Forth from his twanging bow
The arrows flew abroad; a threefold ſtore
His never-failing quiver held; of ſteel

The firſt, of gold the next; thoſe, fatal oft
To *Satan* and his legions; theſe, in Heav'n
Far-fam'd, the potent and triumphant arms
Of flaming *Cherubim*. The third obtain'd
A twofold temper, as the fervid ray
Now kindles life, and now deſtroys: Of theſe
A formidable ſtore await the day,
When, at the general marſhalment, *thy Hoſts*,
O God! innumerable, range themſelves
Beneath their ſtandards. That apoſtate crew
Worſhipp'd on earth as *Gods*, with ſacrifice
And ſolemn invocation, left their ſhrines,
When He made bare his holy arm, and fled,
With wounds, inflicted on their hinder parts,
Transfix'd, the badge of ſhame perpetual: Hell
Was ſtirred up to help them; but they found
In Hell no ſhelter from his rigid ſhafts!

O Grave, where is thy victory! O Death,
Where is thy ſting! Their teeth are broke; by Him
Spoiled, who us'd to take the ſpoil. *Abaddon*

Howl-

Howling, from all her depths; "my vanquiſh'd thrones
"Smite, with aſtoniſhment, their ſtrengthleſs knees!"

Wond'ring the *Areopagite* exclaims,
Or Nature's *God* now ſuffers, or the world
Haſtes to it's limit. For he found his art
Of no effect; though us'd to calculate
With certainty Heav'n's motions, and foretel
Events. But now the moon held far aloof
Her ſhadowy cone from earth's accuſtom'd track
Thro' Heav'n's cerulian fields; nor leſs amaz'd
The trembling Prieſt, who waiting in his courſe
About the altar, ſaw the hallow'd veil
Rent downward from the top, whence all diſclos'd
The Holieſt: ſcarce inform'd of ſuch diſgrace
The High-Prieſt, ere the ſoldiers, out of breath,
Related what had paſt. All-pow'rful gold
Seal'd up their lips, and adding guilt to guilt,
That hard'ned race His miſſion yet reject.

But thoſe that truſted in Him, ſore aſtound,
Were ſcatter'd here and there; ſave that the chief
Yet cheriſh'd hope, but ſcarce knew whence to wait
Deliv'rance. Two now journey'd on their way
Down to *Emmäus*. Theſe together held
Cloſe Conference. Now *Cleophas* relates,
To cheer the other, what, concerning *Chriſt*,
He had both heard and ſeen. An angel told
His birth to ſhepherds. From the diſtant eaſt
Kings came and worſhipp'd, by a wond'rous ſtar
Led thro' the wilderneſs, till now it ſtood
O'er *Bethlem*, where He lay. They ſaw, and fell
Proſtrate with offer'd gifts before the babe,
Tho' meanly ſwath'd, and in a manger laid:
As if his birth, an ignominious death
Should ſignify. And ſcarce his mother claſp'd
Her wond'rous offspring, ere the tyrant ſought
His life; nay, ſought it in the ſtreaming blood
Of little innocents. But here forewarn'd,
His parents to the land of *Egypt* fled,
There ſojourning awhile. And now they dwelt

At *Nazareth*: I knew Him then, a Youth
Paſt common eſtimation wiſe and grave,
But chearful in his aſpect; with delight
He ſeem'd to ſerve his parents, friends, nay all;
Following his father's calling; ſoon in that
He grew expert, for diligence and ſkill
Eſteem'd. By day he wrought, and then at night
Read *Moſes* and the Prophets; oft his lamp
Burnt till the morning watch; and now inſpir'd,
He ſeem'd to give their meaning Scarce of age
Paſt twelve, when yearly, as the cuſtom is,
We worſhipp'd at *Jeruſalem*, He held
Long diſputation with the learned *Sages*;
Exceeding all, for pertinence of words,
And inference concluſive. All, amaz'd
At his endowments, both of mind and perſon,
Drank up, with liſt'ning ears, his honey'd ſpeech,
And gaz'd upon his goodly form. But ſoon
His parents found Him; over-charg'd with care
They ſought Him thro' their kin, but here at laſt

Saw

Saw him engag'd, and tenderly rebuk'd;
Whom with myſterious words He anſwer'd mild.
Subject to them, till, from the bloom of youth
Paſſing to manhood, in his thirtieth year.

Since *that* his life was one continued train
Of miracles, not ſuch as might beſpeak
The inſolence of pow'r, with cunning ſleights
Combin'd; but ſuch as rather might evince
Mercy on man's infirmities. We ſaw
His Father's glory, lighting as a dove,
And heard unutterable words; ſcarce heard
Ere John bare witneſs—Lo! of whom I ſpake!
Behold the Lamb of *God!* ordain'd to ſave
His people from their ſins: How ſav'd, if now
The light of *Iſrael* fails, and *David*'s houſe
Nearly extinct? but we are often us'd
To diſappointment. By His people ſeen
A little ſeaſon, when his light aroſe,
And all expected he would ſhortly take
The ſceptre o'er *Judea*; he was led

Into the deſart, by a ſtrange impulſe:
Unfed, ſave what by angels was ſupply'd,
When forty days, and forty tedious nights,
Were ſpent in cold and hunger. Sought the while
Both by his mother, and a few ſad friends,
Who clave to Him, as one by whom we hop'd
Deliv'rance from the iron yoke of *Cæſar*.
Again appearing, now He manifeſts
His Glory! when in *Galilee* he grac'd
The marriage with his preſence, into wine
Turning pure water! hence his fame went forth
Thro' all *Judea*; while the multitude,
Following, heard his words, and ſaw his works.
He cleans'd the lepers, with his hallow'd touch!
Heal'd the diſeaſed with a word! We ſail'd
Acroſs the lake, where *Galilee* extends
Her border, in the veſſel tempeſt-toſs'd:
Great were our fears to periſh. He the while
Serenely ſlept. I ſaw, and yet retain
His features; how compos'd! while, unadorn'd,
About his ſhoulders flow'd the graceful curls

The ſport of winds. Now, by our fears awoke,
At his rebuke the ſea and wind were huſh'd!
Landed at laſt, He nor refreſhment ſought,
Nor change of raiment, though among the firſt
To ſuccour others wants, His own laſt ſerv'd.

Not far from thence abode, among the tombs,
Two lunaticks, whom inſtant He releas'd
From bondage, long by Satan held; who ſought
His ſuff'rance only to poſſeſs the ſwine;
Which granted, down the yawning precipice
They ruſh'd. Their keepers fled; and we, amaz'd,
Saw in appearance here his ſtrength put forth,
More to evince his Pow'r, than evidence
His uſual Goodneſs: yet when we requir'd
Fire, as *Elias* heretofore, from Heav'n,
On thoſe that held us in contempt, He check'd
Our forward *Zeal*, as ſent from *God* to ſave!
To ſpend, and to be ſpent! to give his life
A ſacrifice for all! The Poor receiv'd
His doctrine freely, and beheld His works.

The rulers yet, with *Phariſaic* pride,
As *Galileans*, held us in contempt:
Tho' preſent, when, obedient to his word,
The paralytic roſe, and to the houſe
Bore off his bed; or when the ſhrunken hand
Was in their ſight reſtor'd: for he no ſtate
Aſſum'd, to their hypocriſy averſe;
Frequent reprov'd, when in the ſynagogues
They pray'd and faſted to be ſeen of men.
Himſelf with *Publicans* would oftentimes
Conſort the while, hence growing more contemn'd.

Yet ſome of theſe believe: among the chief
He who receiv'd his daughter back to life
Reſtor'd! What wonder, when *his* garment's hem
Emitted virtue, whence the woman ſtaunch'd
Her iſſue! whom diſtinguiſh'd in the throng
His piercing eye could ſingle out: She fell
Trembling before him, from that hour made whole.
The blind were often at his ſolemn word,
Or inſtant touch, reſtor'd to ſight! The deaf

Heard!

Heard! and the dumb proclaim'd his wond'rous works!
What wanted to confirm our ſtaggering faith
Was amply furniſh'd, when at *Bethany*
We ſaw our brother *Lazarus* was rais'd;
Such works the LORD when living wrought: but, dead,
What hope remains that *Iſrael* ſhall obtain
The promiſes, by Prophets long foretold.

Thus talking on their way. Whom JESUS now
O'ertook; but not in form as when he bore
Our mortal nature; hence to them unknown.
What things are theſe whereof ye now, thus ſad,
Commune together? They reply'd in brief.

Art Thou a ſtranger only, to inquire
What Things have happen'd? Doubtleſs thou haſt heard
Jeſus of Nazareth, a man approv'd
To all the people, both by ſigns from *Heav'n*,
And works of mercy which he wrought, is not.
Our rulers have deliver'd him to death,
Three Days ſince buried; tho' by him we hop'd

Salva-

Salvation. Certain women too have ſeen
Angels, who now affirm that He is riſen.

Kindling with ſeeming zeal, and yet conceal'd,
He anſwer'd, " Fools! and ſlow to apprehend
" The ſcriptures! thus it well becometh CHRIST
" To ſuffer, ere he reigns. When *Moſes* ſaith,
" A Prophet like to me ſhall GOD raiſe up,
" Shall not CHRIST firſt, like him, of no account
" Be deem'd? Like *Joſeph* by his brethren ſold?
" Like *Jacob* forced from the heritage?
" Or *David* chas'd by *Saul* from hill to hill?
" Like *Job* afflicted? Was not *Daniel* caſt
" To lions? and *Elias* forc'd to fly
" The wrath of *Jezebel*, who ſought to ſlay
" Twice fifty *Prophets* hid in caves, and fed
" With bread and water? Thro' much ſuff'ring thus
" We gain perfection. What *Eſaias* ſaith
" Remark ye not, or *David* in the Pſalms,
" Speaking of CHRIST? The *Prophets* all agree,
" That thus it muſt be, ere *Meſſiah* reigns.

Explain-

Explaining thus the ſacred oracles,
Attention held them mute, now ere they wiſt
Ent'ring the village. Here they ſtopp'd: his way
Still holding on; and now, as half conſtrain'd,
He turn'd aſide at their requeſt. The hoſt
Set bread, which JESUS took and brake, in act
To bleſs, as when he held the ſupper; hence
Diſcern'd, ſcarce known before He diſappears.

Wonder and joy ſucceed, while each to each
Confirms the viſion. Doubtleſs it is He!
Did not our hearts, as uſual, when he ſpake,
Burn at his preſence He ſo well explain'd
The ſcriptures? Up they roſe, and on their way
Trod lighter to the city. Joy elates
Their breaſts, diſpelling grief and ſullen care.

Arriv'd, they found the brethren overjoy'd,
Who told what things had happen'd; JESUS ſeen
Alive by women, who his body ſought:
Of *Peter* then, and *John*. Now, while amaz'd

All

All hear their ſtory, how he diſappear'd,
In breaking bread firſt known——Again confeſs'd
He hails them; "Peace be to you!" They, afraid,
Shrink from his preſence; whom He thus beſpoke.

"Fear not, 'tis I; no ſpirit; handle, ſee,
"My hands and feet: have ſpirits fleſh and bones?"
Then ſhew'd his hands and feet, where yet the nails
Rude marks had left, and where the ſpear had gor'd
His ſide: for joy, while yet they heſitate,
He call'd for food, and eat it up——Convinc'd,
They now believ'd Him, while He farther ſpake:

"All pow'r, henceforth, to me, in Earth and Heav'n
"Is now committed. That of which I ſpake
"Ye ſee fulfill'd; the ſcriptures hence remain
"Unbroken; what the *Prophets*, what the *Pſalms*,
"Relate concerning me, of which ye are
"My witneſſes." He ſaid, and diſappear'd.

Rejoicing, they believ'd. But *Dydimus*,
Then abſent, held in doubt what they affirm'd——

Except

Except I ſee his hands and feet, and ſides,
And handle theſe, I cannot think Him ris'n.

"Draw near," again appearing, JESUS ſaid,
"Behold my hands and feet; theſe, and my ſide,
"Handle, and be not faithleſs." Unconvinc'd,
Till by the touch inform'd, he now exclaims,
"My Lord! and God!" not without cauſe rebuk'd
For unbelief. Nor vainly we expect
The promiſe, if, unſeeing, we believe.

Thoſe who receiv'd, and publiſh'd to the world
His reſurrection, not unworthy liv'd
Of what they held. Their lives were innocent;
Their deaths heroic; breathing cordial love
To one another, not affecting ſtate.
Well is the word receiv'd in them, who find
Like tempers, like conformity to thoſe
Rejected of the world; but in their ſouls
Poſſeſſing joy and ſweet content. His ſteps
They follow, nor ſhall miſs of their reward.

[illegible] Except I see his hands and feet, and face,
[illegible] And thereby think, I cannot think Him risen.

[illegible] "Put in my hands and feet, side, and my side,
[illegible] then I," said he, "will believe." Unconfined,
[illegible] still by like sweet faith and He now credeans.
[illegible] "My Lord and God!" a confession such
For unbelief Nor vainly we expect
The promise, if, with us, we believe.

[illegible] to the world
Have not yet [illegible] but by word only
Of what they [illegible] Their lives were [illegible]
Their death's [illegible]; [illegible] have
To one Angelus, but multiply [illegible]
[illegible] the [illegible] in death, who [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]
Rejoice [illegible] [illegible]
Receiving [illegible] [illegible]
They follow, not [illegible] of [illegible]